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THE CALL TO WORK.

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A BACCALAUREATE SERMON

TO THE SENIOR CLASS

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA,

BY THE

REV. CHARLES H. HALL, D. D.,

RECTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

DELIVERED IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, AT CHAPEL HILL, N. C.,  
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# THE CALL TO WORK.

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“ Why stand ye here all the day idle ?”—St. Matthew, xx: 6.

The men to whom this question was put had a good excuse to offer ; for no man had employed them. This also explains the righteous judgment of the man that was a householder, in giving them a full day's wages. He plainly was not encouraging pauperism or fostering the luxury of idleness. Free to do what he would with his own, but not free, as alas the rich men of our age often think themselves to be, to forget the claims of the bread-winners to a fair expectation of each day's living, as founded in the sense of universal justice, he atoned for their want of opportunity, and sent them home at evening satisfied, and with a higher conception of the mutual duties of the brotherhood of man. It was not the necessary inference from the parable of Christ that he was settling the rules that should prevail between capital and labor, when as an incident of the story He introduced this item of it. It is characteristic of His teaching that even in these little and accidental side-issues of His discourses we can trace that profound connection of the universal justice tempered by mercy that abounds in His Gospel, and gives to each age sufficient indications of His divine wisdom.

It is thus that God always deals with us all, if we are only wise enough to see it. Probably in the last survey and universal judgment men will learn that the Judge of all the earth has always done right ; that the man who has borne the burden and heat of the day, as the one who came in at the third and sixth and ninth hours, did good work equally with those who were standing unemployed without fault of their own at the eleventh hour, have each and all, by the common wants and griefs and toils of life, the various com-

pensations of multiform environment, earned this penny a day, and received from the result of this strange life of ours the just recompense of reward for all his deeds. If they who *wait* in the porches of the great temple of God *serve* equally—provided that waiting be their appointed lot—with those who toil, then the final balance, when the evening comes, and the steward calls the tally, is found to be one and the same effect—a day's bread for a day's labor. I say that the real point of the parable was not this, but a different one, namely: that subtle teaching which confounded the haughty Pharisees, that God is no respecter of persons, but would yet call in the Gentiles to His Kingdom of Grace, though as it seemed to them at the eleventh hour. They had been left strangers to the special Covenant of Israel, which the Prophet Isaiah had, you remember, likened to "a vineyard." God had not elected them to the promises or the duties of the Mosaic law, which was necessarily exclusive of all save the seed of Abraham. The Pharisees had unconsciously formed in their minds the prejudices of a *labor union*, and had settled it, that God was at the head of it, and would not tolerate any but skilled labor, or what they called skilled labor. Hence the bitter truth to them was, that these unemployed Gentiles, standing in the marketplace all the day idle as to the rites and ordinances of the Mosaic law, who had not been tithing mint, anise and cummin, nor making long prayers in order to soften their throats to swallow widows' houses; who had not become learned in the art of religion, whereby an acute teacher can soothe his conscience with such words as "corban" and leave father and mother to starve—yea, that the dogs of the Gentiles should yet be called in at the eleventh hour, and when the evening reckoning should come would receive this penny a day, a living from God, a just recompense, as grace graduates justice, for doing what they could. There are two parts in all life—one's self and his environment. He makes life at last the resultant of the two forces. Probably all of

us will find that Jesus was uttering for the first time a truth of God's dealing with us, to which conscience, reason and our affections alike respond. No man will suffer in the final arbitration for what he had not ; for neglecting work that he could not do ; for not rising to sublimities that he was shut away from by lack of faculty or opportunity. On the other hand, his results will be potent for good to him only as he did what he could. Standing idle in the market-place when no man would employ them, was no prejudice in the sight of this man who was an householder. A penny, or a denarius, a day, in value about fifteen cents, as things were then in the East, was the equivalent for a day's living of a laborer, for himself and family. It is only a *genre* picture of life as it was known to the hearers of this parable. They could, and doubtless did, see that the picture of this prophet of Galilee had in it a special and national meaning.

But here let me confess, before I go farther, that my attention was called to this text by an incident which is recorded in the body of the remarks made last year by a speaker at the inaugural proceedings of this Memorial Hall. Speaking of one who has merited well of your State and University, he says that "there was a tradition in College of a green, awkward mountain boy, early selected as a fit subject for the sport and ridicule of his associates." I happen to remember just such an apparition in my college life. We freshmen had been together about a week or so, and had begun to feel the influence of clique-ness, when in the midst of a recitation the door opened, and a black-eyed youth appeared. He was dressed in a scotch-plaid cloak that had perhaps come to him from his grandfather, with huge brass fixtures holding it together ; and his whole appearance grotesque to the last degree, and his manner a singular compound of verdant shyness and self-assertion. To his question, given in unmistakable tones of a country-bred boy, "Is this the Freshman class?" the response was a shout of laughter, in which even the grave tutor joined.

Dropping his cloak to the ground, the Kentucky youth, with the spirit of Andrew Jackson, purposed a fight then and there with tutor and section, if that seemed desirable. He was soothed, and an apology was made to his wounded self-respect. We soon found that he was not at all the sort of man that one cares to trifle with, and he became a leader of others in not merely manliness, but also in elegance and refinement. His figure came back to me as I read these words from the speech of the President of the Board of Trustees.\*

Certain idle and mischievous classmates prevailed on the "awkward mountain-boy" to give them a Sermon. My recollection of sermons does not suggest any special *fun* to be gotten out of them; but perhaps things are different in this neighborhood. "He asked their serious consideration of the text to be found in St. Matthew xx: 6 verse—"why stand ye here all the day idle?" and as he reasoned with them, in all the earnestness of his soul of duty neglected, opportunities wasted, of temptations that lie in wait for the idle, of hopes disappointed and parental hearts crushed, one by one they stole away until the young preacher discovered that he was left alone; and then raising his voice, and pointing his finger in the direction of his retreating audience, he shouted, "Go! go! in the name of our common Creator, I bid you go to work in His vineyard. He promises a penny a day each; and to my certain knowledge not one of you is worth half the money."

Allowing something for the softened lights of tradition in such cases, it certainly spoke well for the preaching which your green and awkward mountain-boys had been listening to, and trained to recognize as the eternal truth of God, that he could on the spur of the moment have given such an utterance, and turned a farce into a sermon.

It is not disrespect that I suggest another scene of Sacred Writ. It was rather a tragedy than a farce, when the sanc-

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\*Governor Scales.

timonious crowd brought to the Son of Man, for his judgment, the "woman taken in adultery," and offered to tempt him to a decision that might be turned to his ruin. So He stooped and wrote on the ground with His finger; and though it is not recorded what he wrote, I doubt not that the word written there was *idolatry*—the spiritual adultery of the whole nation which, by the laws of Moses, had separated them all from the mercy and love of the God of Abraham. Then they, too, went out one by one, and Jesus forgave the sinner, if she had grace to "go and sin no more."

But, returning to the boy's text, my feeling has been—and I trust that I may carry you with me—that I could do no better than follow his lead; and, coming here a stranger among you, should try and re-echo in my way his weighty words, "duty neglected, opportunities wasted, of temptations that lay in wait for the idle, of hopes disappointed, and parental hearts crushed"—themes, each of them, that have a rare tragic significance as one thinks of college life, North or South.

My first suggestion, then, is, that the age in which you collegians are to live and work, is singularly wanting in the sense of personal responsibility. Your temptations to effloresce in outside things, to lean on something else than your own personal and persistent effort, to evaporate the energy of work in things exterior to the one steady, efficient and persistent sense of labor—the acceptance intelligently of your environments, whatever they are, and inside of them working with your might what is given you to do—this whole inclination is against you, and is your temptation to stand idle. There is a laborious idleness, as well as a common sloth. There is possible a perverted atonement, a base introversion of duty, wherein one works at something that is not his set task, and that he has no call to do. It is a wretched subterfuge of the hardest sort of sinfulness when one is most busily and uselessly idle. No child is busier in extemporized devices than the one who seeks thereby to



call the mother's or teacher's attention from his previous dereliction. Perhaps some of you can recall hours of desperate energy when you have tried to cram for an examination, that you hope to scrape through, and to hide your carelessness and negligence. It has been always the besetting sin of genius. It is, in my judgment, the besetting co-ordinate of the drinking habits of our people. Let me dwell on this awhile.

Education is not in the head, the brain, the memory or the tongue alone. A man may be a storehouse of knowledge, may be a cyclopædia of facts, a lexicon of language, he may have all the arts and sciences in mind, and with it all be as useless, as absurd and stupid for real life as the merest hind who follows the plough. Mere erudition is not of itself education. The world has for three or four centuries been ready to rush to any plain, like that of Dura, when the Nebuchadnezzar of the time has set up a golden image, and summoned all men with music of sackbut, harp and dulcimer, to worship. But that time is passing—certainly for a season. The true education is bringing all that is in a man up to the surface, where he meets his environments, and acts upon them wisely, timely and effectually.

Take, for illustration, one popular fallacy. Men blindly adore eloquence. Demosthenes and Cicero—why should not the collegian set them before him, and become the mighty third of a matchless trio? He sets to work with this dream, much as you see an untrained grey-hound run with painful speed to catch the eagle which is soaring unconscious in the blue sky above him. I am not overvaluing either of those men of old, nor undervaluing any right effort after effective speech now; but in each case the ambitious youth fails to take in the environments, the needs, the perils, of the orator. Demosthenes had a country in the pangs of dissolution as his mighty impulse. He did not set before his mind in boyhood, "Given a country about to fall, and I will flash an eternal eloquence over the future of mankind."

He prepared himself to do what work was set before him, and in his age to defend the causes that came to him. He grew by hard, concentrated labor. He stored his mind and trained his tongue to plead at the bar of the demos or the Areopagus such causes as came to him; and when the wiles and the gold of Philip of Macedon was bringing ruin upon his country, he rose by the gift of genius, but no less by the gift of *work well done before*, to the power to speak deathless words. Imagine him living in any other age, either before, when Athens was safe, or afterwards when she had become enslaved, and the story had been different.

Do you ask me, is eloquence a lost art? I answer, by no means; but the man now who would aim to reproduce orations of that sort would certainly have the opportunity to point his finger at his retreating audience, or to resort to shouting to wake up those who remained about him. The greatest bores and nuisances in churches, court-rooms or senate-houses to-day, are men who labor under this illusion—that eloquence is something that can be made to order. I will not attempt to determine the proportion of individual power in the man, and the element of opportunity that lies in the need of the hour, but I remind you how often in school and academy you have listened to the words of Patrick Henry on the Stamp-Act resolutions and never been thrilled or stunned by them, as were the men who saw in them the flash of lightning that revealed the yawning chasm of the Revolution. It is a curious fact that in advanced life Henry wrote on the back of the Mss. that contained these resolutions these words: “Righteousness alone can exalt them as a nation. Reader! whoever thou art, remember this: and in thy sphere, practice virtue thyself, and encourage it in others.”

It would be a long and wearisome catalogue that would contain the victims and the sufferings of this illusion, that men of education and eloquence are very efficient or useful *per se*. Experience dispels the illusion, and the disappointed

individual whose training has been partial and unhealthy easily falls before any temptation that gives him another excitement. There are vast numbers of men in this country in all the professions who are unduly disappointed as to the great objects of life. Many of them were unwise or unworthy; but I speak mostly of those who have been beguiled into false estimates of the circumstances of their future work. They began with dreams of a world which has not been and which is not. More perhaps than ever is it important to work out the problem of personal education for one's self. The colleges themselves bear witness of the unsteadiness of the past foundations.

I do not say that the times are out of joint, but say, rather, that he is wise who comprehends the value of the fact that with every advantage a man may have he must at least *educate himself*. Given the best surroundings, the most skillful teachers, the most comfortable class-room and stimulating companions, the abundant library and lecture halls, the most studious neophyte may be laboriously idle, and may become the victim of trifles. It is with man partly as with the fig tree, which was full of leaves, and had everything *except fruit*.

I am not holding up the low mechanical theory, that an instant advantage is a thing to be sought. A generation of civil and mining engineers, of chemists ready to transmute all things to commercial purposes, or a horde of business collegians would not meet the case. It is just here the delusion rises that misleads the coming generation. "Man does not live by bread alone." No education is sufficient that does not reach man at all points, and give him the food that is more to him than the bread which perishes. I confine it to individuals, and leave the world-wide issues alone. Each of us has but one life to lead; but one day to work in the vineyard; and then comes the night when no man can work. My proposition is, that the temptation presses you to believe that the value of education to you lies in the



visible marks that you make on your surroundings—not in the marks that are made on you. It is not your surroundings that are being educated, but *you*. You in your time will make efficient marks upon your generation, by the exact value of your personal cultivation.

I may draw my illustration from my own profession. The final test of religion is in the piety of its believers. The religion that has to-day the greatest number of professors is Buddhism, or that and Brahminism combined. The test of it must be in the value of the manhood that its undisturbed sway has thus far produced. Taking the European races at their worst, one hardly hesitates to rank the best of Hindooism at a low value. The regulated despair of the Hindoo books finds its echo in the indolent rest of the races that have been moulded by it. Better far the *unrest* of Europe than “a cycle of Cathay.”

To come nearer home, the real object of our form of religion is the realization of the mind, heart and life of a believer in Christ, of the truth of his representation of the true *ideal man*. Many would word it, the saving of the soul, but I do not. The saving of the soul may be made the quintessence of selfishness. We may take one thing for granted, that without any palliatives or doctrinal alleviations no soul is ever saved that is not worth saving. The penny a day must be wrought out as a just recompense of reward. Part of that working out is by the divine assistance; and the true life is always hid with Christ in God. The divine mind weighs every one of us with exact justice and pardons infirmities, and judges not as the world judges, but it still judges rightly. One cannot work save as God “works in him to will and to do;” but he must none the less work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, because of his knowledge of this law, and the immense responsibility it puts on him. Others again would say that the object of our religion is benevolence and helpfulness to others. They tell us that it aims to make us love our neigh-

bor as ourselves, and in accomplishing that object it is finished. I reply, it aims to use this benevolence, not as an end but as a means, and when the means are finished, and such a happy state is accomplished, then its true work looms up before the mind, which is always the glory of God, shown in making the standard by which we lift others higher and higher, even the making ourselves more and more worthy of being loved, so that we can love others better and more beneficially.

My idea of the object of revelation is two-fold. One part of it is to reveal the Christ, the Son of Man and the Emmanuel or God in us, the *ideal man*, as God intends him; and the other part of it is to put in our reach by the church the spiritual means by which we may have fellowship with the ideal man through the word of truth.

For instance, one idea of the Bible, as a scientific fact is, that there is a purity of heart possible (under grace) by which a man can see God. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God"—see him hereafter perfectly; see him here efficiently. Christ is the Way, the Truth, the Life, by which we come to God, and stop only at the veil that comes of our environments. The Church—I mean his mystical Body, that series and system of means by which we sinners can get through Him as historic, into Him as living now, and so become the temples of the Holy Ghost that dwelleth in us as a source and fountain of all true life,—all that we rightly call the Church is the means near and at hand by which God helps us to find Him, and in a fashion to see *him as he is*.

The age has been putting the largest part of religious motive into the far future, and trying to lift us by the leverage of special hopes and fears of what *shall* or *may* be after our probation is finished. My own view is, that Christ is living now with us as really as he ever did with Peter or John—that in a profound sense, "blessed are those of us who do not see and yet believe." For in the last analysis, the gist of the faith in Christ of which cometh salvation is

simply this, that we believe radically, constantly and as simply and easily as we breathe, that Jesus was the son of God—in other words. God's own model of all he wishes us to be. As an artist, the Creator has produced one faultless picture of the King in his beauty; and he leaves it before us, that we may be won by its influence to become like it. This is the New Commandment that is given unto us, together with the precepts, advices and warnings that help us to put it in the best light, and cleanse our sight, that we may see it truly. We are told by an apostle that he did not know, and had never been told, what he should be after this life ended, but that his faith had at last settled down on this law—that “when the Christ should appear he would be like Him, for he should see Him as He is.” Be sure that he could not have said this unless he had educated himself always in the experiments of being like what he saw Christ to be now. When he began as a fisherman, leaving his nets and Zebedee his father, he little dreamed of what he should be on Patmos, able to see the visions of glory which still charm the world, simply from having seen what he could of Jesus. Often he had caught a new vision of Him, and risen like the eagle a degree higher from the sight. Hence his highest revelation of heaven at last became, not streets of gold and gates of pearl, but *becoming like* the beloved of God.

Now, possibly this may sound to you as the words of one who singeth a song, or as that grand poet Ezekiel worded it, “Ah, Lord! doth he not speak parables?” and it is just here that I fault the very piety of the age, that there is this unreality, this *far-offness*, about it all. Any religion that aspires to hold this nation must be as present in its effectual motives as the sins and the devils are which it seeks to prevent and to scatter. The anchor that is to hold the ship must be carried at her bows. The sense of the ideal life must be here, in potent emphasis, where the temptation is. If I am obliged to think back twenty centuries in order to find the ideal of life and duty, and possibly run down the

scale back again so as to balance justly my motives before I decide, it takes too long. The devil has abundant time to launch a dozen fiery darts while I am holding my hand, *to think*. The shield, you remember, was next to the sword in the hand of the ancient soldier—the one thing that was to be held always ready to be of use in warfare. That faith which can be an effective shield and defence now must be the instantaneous suggestion of the soul, the native response of the reason, and the trained habit of mind and heart. It may have on it all the mystic carving of the shield of Achilles; but if it be not always ready for instant use it is of little service. Any habit of mind that allows moments of indecision, or that requires time for inward stimulus to recall what has been or what may be a future contingency, is a source of weakness and ominous of failure.

Now, if this be true, all that looks away from the education of a man in this habit is more or less *laborious trifling*—is after a sort “standing all the day idle.” You do not need that I should illustrate this necessity of instant readiness in all the common affairs of life. The farmer who looks to the clouds in idle speculation, and forgets to sow the seed of the day, fails of a crop. The physician who is abstracted by various schemes of medicine, and delays to offer the remedy of the hour, loses his patient. The lawyer who neglects to secure, arrange and present at the proper moment the circumstances and witnesses of the case on trial, dishonors his profession. The statesman who is rambling away into side issues and individual ambitions when the hour of danger presses upon the country, is so far a traitor. Not only must all these know the powers with which they deal, but they must be ready to honor those powers by promptness to use them in the allotted crisis. We should unhesitatingly fault each as false, idle, as an elaborate trifler, unless he met the moments of issue with full preparation; and as I look at things this age is sick of these dubious impulses on all classes of men, and has begun to wake up to the ne-

cessity of a higher idea of education. It demands of its leaders a vigorous and rounded preparation for instant fitness for activity. Shame and disappointment wait on all busy men who betray their past idleness by the defeats which result from it, whether it be the one who loses the train at a railroad station, or the late Emperor of France, who surrendered Sedan because of his previous negligence for the preparation of all the munitions of active war. Every man who demonstrates by the progress of events that he has been standing idle when he should have labored on the one great duty set him to do, is scouted and despised, rather than pitied.

I turn to the application of the same idea to education. There are two sorts of students in college who are standing idle. Of one of them I need say little. The youth whose text I used has classified them, and given in their indictment of "duty neglected, opportunities wasted, temptations courted by the idle, hopes disappointed, and parental hearts crushed." Such men are the briars and thorns of the groves of learning. They pervert all advantages into evils. I speak rather to the class who are elaborating idleness in reputable ways. Perhaps the shortest way to this idea may be found in the differences of the two men whose names are most familiar to us—Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson—the former, who started the ball of the Revolution, replete with genius, and gifted with an eloquence which the latter lacked and honored. My own esteem for Mr. Henry is largely based on Mr. Jefferson's testimony to his eloquence, certainly much more than on Wirt's biography. Henry was beyond question one of the most fascinating idlers that ever illustrated the eccentricities of genius. His education was largely gained from the hither end of his fishing rod. Now and then Nature will take one of her pets, and put him to this school, where, idle to all appearances, careless, in short as to all ordinary laws, he is yet made somehow to think rightly, and throw off shams, and dig down into the eternal.



laws of his being, muse of the incongruities of kings three thousand miles away, and of oppressions around him; and he is trained, not by bell and book, but by an inward law of genius, that he cannot evade nor quite ignore. But imagine, for once, what Henry would have been,—and I think I can see that he himself often revolved it in sober age,—if he had been gifted with Jefferson's laborious industry. If, in broader scenes than he dreamed of when a youth, he had been possessed of the training and stores of elaborated thought and learning of the Sage of Monticello, he would have been to-day without a peer on the register of American benefactors. As Jefferson said of him, "he set the ball of revolution in motion." Yea, he often gave it fresh impact afterwards; but the lines of its course were marked out, not by him, but by two of the most laborious statesmen that we have had; namely, Jefferson and Hamilton. Any one of us in reading their biographies must feel ashamed of the defects and sins of his own education. Both of them great, and full of native power, were toilers, whether in silent study, in the duties of a profession, or as statesmen and public officials. They may be pointed at as men who, however else they may have erred, never stood idle in school, in the market-place, the forum or the senate. They had a goal before them from the beginning; and they kept their eyes fastened upon it, turning them never aside to any fascination.

That, under all disputes and discussions now pending about college studies, classic or scientific, enforced or voluntary, is the main point of interest to all sensible men. Any young man here who recognizes that life has an object and meaning, and that he has an end to which his abilities and opportunities tends, may feel his life-call, just as the boat anchored in a little bay may rock on the swell sent by the outside waves to reach it, and may feel too that this life-law is worth his care and thought. Many a man I have seen fail at the pinch because he has been an idler—a pur-

poseless, careless and neglectful student. Nero, who fiddled while Rome was burning, or Louis, who made locks while the throne of France was crumbling beneath him, were idlers, or something worse than idlers.

The defect of education as a *system* in this land is, to my mind, in its misdirection of personal energy and intellectual labor. We who aim at learning have often been left behind by the great powers of the world's real life ; and, like Patrick Henry, have been sauntering about the pleasant groves of various studies, while a revolution has been rolling on around us. Many a man discovers himself to be of the class of Dominie Sampson, gifted with ambition, and the butt of his busy fellowmen. Learned idleness is still idleness, or something worse. A voice sounds now in our ears, "Go! work to-day in my vineyard." Possibly the son who did not go might at eventide have given the census of all the workmen in all the vineyards of his neighborhood, or may have sung sweet songs of the vine, and forecast the many autumn frolics of a successful vintage ; but he did not go to work. I take it, God has set every man here, to-day, his own *work*, and the true education is to find out what that work is, and then bend every faculty to prepare for it.

May I conclude with a few words of forecast. This State of North Carolina has always betrayed an abundance of mental and passional energies, that show to me the harmony of its climate and surroundings with successful practical labors in study and thought. You are all more familiar than I can be with the incidents of your past, and the honorable names that have shed lustre on the society of your commonwealth. I shall not recall them. I look now on the past record as a whole. One vital part of education is the environment of the persons educated.

It is by no means an accident that all great religions have sprung from regions nearing the tropics, and most of the chief poets have been dwellers in lands where nature was lavish of her gifts of beautiful and genial life. The Psalms

of Israel, its proverbs and inspired visions, fell on the sunny soil of this latitude. The men of your own Mecklenburg county first gave organic voice to the thoughts of national resistance to oppression.

I am very much of a believer in the theory of the Frenchman Taine, that climate and bountiful nature have very much to do with the making and moulding of men. As he traces the literature of sombre and stormy, yea, and chilly England, he prepares you to see the literary character of Englishmen; or again, in sunny France, the mobile and brilliant Frenchman. Looking over the past history of our country we can feel the difference between the Maine man, hardened to toil against an inhospitable climate or to defy a dangerous sea; and on the other hand the Southern man, full of intellectual vigor, trained by something more than abundant leisure—by the whole surroundings of a wholesome, genial climate, charmed to study by the quiet and happy balance of mind and body, till in such men as Calhoun, Pettigrew, Polk, Hawks, and your own Caldwell, they become leaders, guides and rulers of men.

If time allowed, it were no hard task to recommend the lines of my position; but I content myself now with the statement only, that the past of the South—certainly of its great plateau that rises above the alluvial lands—attests abundant capabilities in the men who have risen to notice, that mark them as peculiar. Now that a revolution has put the white race on its own merits, now that a long period of recuperation has taught its bitter but wholesome lessons, now that a new start is begun to be felt in building up these States, we may properly reprobate all idlers who fail to see and use their peculiar advantages.

I am told, in New York, by those who know the practical movements of the times, that they can see a great advance in the near future for your State. Immigrants follow the lines of the railways. Portions of this State that lay remote and unknown to the rest of the world when your Dr. Mitch-



ell looked down from the top of his royal mountain over the lands of five great States, are now receiving the admiration of multitudes who have waked up to their existence as a novelty. Men—white men, men of races that will convert the hillsides and valleys of Haywood, Jackson and Buncombe into gardens of plenty, men to be moulded into shape, somewhat more honorable than the mountaineers and moonshiners of the past or present—are preparing to find better homes in these temperate regions than they have had elsewhere. You can no more keep them out than the red man could keep out your ancestors. You ought not to try. Your question is, how to meet them, and to continue your history as honorable in the future as it has been in the past. I can forecast the day, and still be no vague dreamer, when this vast plateau, with its majestic mountains and fertile valleys, will teem with a homogeneous population, and the age of *tar heels* be the amusing tradition of the half-forgotten past, when a genial climate will tempt the white comers to lay aside the cloak of selfishness and remorseless competition that they have kept about them in other conditions, and meet nature half way in glad recognition of her smiles; when a century has passed away, and from Raleigh to Murphy, these upper counties, the very garden of our United States, have become filled with agriculturalists, and spotted with villages and towns—not with single great cities, that, like crocodiles, eat up all else and only grow scales and teeth—there will be a mighty power developed here that will make itself felt in blessings at home and in honors abroad.

What then will be the position of this University? Very much what the men it sends forth shall make it. These people will want leaders; great minds and characters; men of intelligent and resolute purpose; men who have stores of real knowledge and sound wisdom; men who have not been idlers, but have studied the call to labor in this vineyard, and have kept the call in view, have resisted outside

temptations to become what other people of other climates and other conditions have been, and have concentrated themselves, passion, ambition, duty and affection, on the work that has been given them to do. There are to be crises before you in the future. There are to be times when the State will need all that your genius or wisdom, your training and acquirements can do, to meet the exigencies of the hour. Of one thing be sure, no true work ever fails; no real wisdom ever lies uncalled for. Work then—not as elaborate idlers, mere loiterers on the stream-side, but with unyielding faith that He who calls you here will call you always, just when and where you ought to be, for his service and for the use of his creatures.

When the century has gone by, many of us, nay all of us, will be ghosts and mere names on the lips of other men. I can fancy myself then standing on the dome of Mount Mitchell, and hearing again what I once heard with delighted awe. A party of us had toiled to its mighty top, and stood together there as the sun went down in the west, and the unclouded full moon rose all beautiful in the east. That lonely grave of the pious and noble discoverer gave a solemn feeling suited to the place and hour. The sea of mountain tops lay before us. The symmetrical Roan shaded gracefully away from its rosy hue to a darker loveliness, and the monster Craggy seemed to bear witness to the old geologic periods when its great gashes had been made by the Creator, as if to defy the storms of all historic ages, and a deepening dark began to hide partly the Smokies and Balsam ranges. The wind had been murmuring in the hemlocks around the party, silent and awed by the scene and by the thought of standing on the loftiest peak of this eastern side of the continent. Suddenly and unnoticed the murmuring breeze ceased, and a strange sound, that was hardly a sound, came to us from no one spot or on no one line of hearing. It became a ghost of a murmur, and slowly increased, with curious lack of any one direction, coming from

no one place. I can hardly describe it. I thought of Elijah in his lonely cave-mouth on Horeb, when the God of his fathers came to him, not in the storm or earthquake, but, as the Hebrew puts it in the *Kol dama*, the voice of silence; or, as we now read it, the *still small voice*. Our sound was the resultant of all the thousand water-falls of all the brooks and rivulets of the abysses between us and Craggy; no one of them able to be heard alone, but all together making the weird evening hymn above the grave of the good man who had fallen in one of them the baptismal gate to heaven. When we shall stand there a century hence, the same hymn of nature will keep up its ceaseless Ter-sanctus, and then another hymn will also be heard, of the myriad homes, the countless cottages, the numberless churches and schools that will tell how men as well as nature ever join the song of the ages. "Great and wonderful are thy works, O God of Nature! Loved and honored thy Beatitudes! O! Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, ever teaching us that our true work is always thine," to labor where Thou hast put us. Thy real lesson always to "learn to labor and to wait." In anticipation of the times when the Master shall send his Steward to call us to his reckoning, when each true man shall receive his *denarius*—his day's wage for his day's work—let us now do our part in the faith of a great future for our children after we are gone—a great future for us all, when at the last, the mountain sepulchre shall be opened, and the stone rolled away from it, and from every sleeping-place of the sons of God.















